



ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
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PLANO ARSONIST SENTENCED TO 27 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON

SHERMAN, Texas -- The owner of Lone Star Guns in Plano, Texas, was sentenced to 27 years in federal prison in connection to the arson fire that destroyed the business in August 2004, John L. Ratcliff, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas, announced today.

U.S. District Judge Richard Schell sentenced Curtis Ray Severns, 40 of Sherman, on his convictions for arson, mail fraud, wire fraud and the use of fire to commit mail and wire fraud. Severns was convicted in December 2006 after a two and one-half-week trial. He was also ordered to pay \$461,731.97 in restitution.

The conviction and sentence were the result of a two-year investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Plano Fire Department. In addition, a Plano Firefighter suffered injuries battling the blaze.

Lone Star Guns had been a fixture in the Plano community for more than 30 years. Several local residents, and other people around the country who utilized Lone Star guns for retail firearm sales and repair services, lost their firearms as a result of the fire. Adjacent businesses also suffered collateral damages. Total damage was listed at approximately \$500,000.

Ratcliff praised the cooperative effort of law enforcement in bringing Severns to justice. "They did an excellent job of uncovering the truth of this fire," he said. "Through hard work and cooperation, the individual who was responsible for this arson will be held accountable and will not be able to profit."

ATF Assistant Special Agent in Charge Ken Chisholm said "this investigation shows our continued effort to work with our fellow agencies to combat violent crime, including arsons, in order to keep our communities safer."

David Kerr, Plano Fire Department's Fire Marshal, said he was pleased with the court ruling and sentencing. "The joint investigation between ATF and the Plano fire Department was a tremendous effort and yielded the proper outcome. The sentence and restitution indicate the seriousness of the act of arson and the loss of business revenue to the community. Most importantly however, it emphasizes how the lives of citizens and our public safety servants were jeopardized."

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Tracey Batson and Terri Hagan and was also assisted by the Plano Police Department, Grayson County Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

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